



European Washington File

Public Affairs Section

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Friday, December 5, 2003

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Transcript: Powell Tells German TV He Hopes Germany Can Aid Iraq Recovery

(Dec. 4 interview in Brussels on ARD-TV)

Secretary of State Colin Powell told German television December 4 that U.S.-German relations are "excellent and improving" after the disagreement over going to war to remove Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, and he hopes Germany will be able to do more to help in Iraq's post-war recovery.

In an interview with ARD-TV while he was in Brussels for the NATO foreign ministers meeting, Powell said he would like to see "all of the nations of the world doing more," and that the international community "should feel an obligation to help the people of Iraq who are coming out of three decades of the most terrible kind of leadership."

Germany, he noted, "has made some offers with respect to helping with the training of police and other things that might happen. And as we move into next year, and as we get closer to the transfer of authority from our coalition forces back to the Iraqi people, and as NATO considers whether or not it ought to perform a more expanded role, Germany might find an opportunity then to make a greater contribution than it is able to now."

Powell was asked his opinion about the German-French-Belgian idea for having the command structure of a European defense force separate from that of NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium. "There is no other headquarters in Europe that has the capacity of SHAPE, so there's no question about an alternative to SHAPE," he said.

He also emphasized that NATO will have the first call on responding to a crisis. "NATO first," he said, "and that is the judgment of NATO and the judgment of the European Union. There's no disagreement."

Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/500/index.htm>

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Text: Coalition, Governing Council Statement on Iraqi Sovereignty

(Restoration of sovereignty by June 30, 2004)

Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority Paul Bremer and President of the Iraqi Governing Council Jalal Talibani issued a statement to the Iraqi people December 1 saying that their sovereignty will be restored by June 30, 2004, in the form of a Transitional Iraqi Government.

A permanent government chosen through direct national elections will replace the transitional government by the end of 2005 after a new permanent constitution has been drafted and ratified, the statement said.

Following is the text of the statement:

(begin text)

[Coalition Provisional Authority
Iraqi Governing Council
December 1, 2003]

A STATEMENT TO THE IRAQI PEOPLE

The November 15 Agreement signed by the Iraqi Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority is an historic step.

It provides for Iraqis to choose a new Iraqi Government through direct, national elections by the end of 2005, on the basis of a permanent constitution.

It provides for a new constitution drafted by Iraqis, who will be chosen by full direct elections by March 2005.

It restores Iraqi sovereignty and ends the occupation by June 30, 2004.

It allows a Transitional Iraqi Government, chosen by caucuses in each governorate, to assume sovereignty and administer elections to draft a constitution.

It ensures that the Transitional Government will operate under a law, drafted by Iraqis, which will provide basic guarantees of freedom for the Iraqi people.

It provides the Iraqi people an opportunity to participate at every stage of a process that restores your sovereignty and guarantees your freedom.

Jalal Talabani, President, Iraqi Governing Council

L. Paul Bremer, Administrator, Coalition Provisional Authority

(end text)

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CPA Advisor Senor Says Reducing Iraq's Debt Is a High Priority

(Iraq's council welcomes announcement of Baker as U.S. envoy)

By Jacqui S. Porth
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The senior advisor of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Baghdad says reducing Iraq's debt is a high priority for both the CPA and Iraq's Governing Council.

CPA Advisor Daniel Senor told reporters at a press conference in Baghdad that the White House announcement December 5 that former Secretary of State James Baker will be President Bush's envoy to resolve Iraq's external financial obligations is evidence of the priority being placed on Iraq debt reduction.

Iraqi Minister of Finance Kamil Gailani asked that a statement about the Baker announcement be read during the press conference, according to Senor. Gailani said Iraq's recovery depends on resolving the country's external debts.

Reading Gailani's statement, Senor said: "I welcome the announcement today by the White House of the appointment of James A. Baker, III, former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury and State Departments, as U.S. presidential envoy for the Resolution of Iraq's external financial obligations. This appointment will give significant momentum to the process of resolving Iraq's external financial obligations and reflects recognition by the United States government of the importance of this process."

Further, the statement said: "Resolving Iraq's external financial obligations is essential for Iraq's economic development, internal stability and ability to move past the dark period of the former regime. I call on all governments to regard the debt resolution process with equal importance and urgency and to move forward rapidly with generous reduction and rescheduling of Iraq's external financial obligations."

Senor was asked to estimate the size of Iraq's external debt, but said that it is difficult to do with any degree of certainty. Combining estimates from sources such as the Paris Club, the London Club's private creditors, and non-Paris Club sovereign creditors with financial transactions between Iraq and the Persian Gulf states, estimates can climb as high as \$125 billion, he said.

Getting to an exact number is "going to require restructuring a lot of these documents and getting a closer look at them," Senor said, adding that it will be an important task for Minister Gailani, the Governing Council and Baker.

Senor was also asked about jurisdictional control of the new Iraqi Army. At the moment, he said, "We are technically an occupational force, so we have a responsibility overall, broadly, for security in the country, and it falls under that mandate." Later, he said, "When we transfer sovereignty over to a sovereign Iraqi government this summer, the new Iraqi Army will fall under that, and they will make decisions about how to structure, whether or not there's a specific ministry assigned to it or it falls under another ministry."

U.S. Army Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt also addressed the Iraqi security situation during the briefing, saying "that the offensive operations that

are being conducted against the enemy in Baghdad have sent a clear message to the terrorists that we will come after you ... kill ... or ... capture you."

Kimmitt, who is deputy director of operations for Combined Joint Task Force 7, also said that commanders suspect that many of the attacks against coalition and Iraqi forces are being funded by non-local sources. In the past week, he said, there have been an average of 19 attacks against non-Iraqi coalition forces and two against Iraqi security personnel or civilians.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: Bush Names Former Secretary of State Baker as Envoy on Iraq Debt

(Huge debt burden endangers Iraq's long-term prospects, he says)

President Bush has named former Secretary of State James Baker as his personal envoy to help Iraq deal with its enormous debt problem.

In a December 5 statement released by the White House, the president said Baker would report directly to him and would work with governments, international institutions and the Iraqis in the effort to restructure and reduce Iraq's official debt.

Bush said the appointment came in response to a request by the Iraqi Governing Council for help in lowering the country's debt, which has been estimated at more than \$125 billion.

"This debt endangers Iraq's long-term prospects for political health and economic prosperity," Bush said. "The issue of Iraq's debt must be resolved in a manner that is fair and does not unjustly burden a struggling nation at its moment of hope and promise."

Baker served as secretary of state under President George H.W. Bush and helped assemble the international coalition for the 1991 Gulf War.

Following is the text of Bush's statement:

(begin text)

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
December 5, 2003

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Iraq is moving toward freedom, stability and prosperity. In order to support this effort, I am pleased to announce today that in response to a request from the Iraqi Governing Council for assistance, I have appointed James A. Baker III to be my personal envoy on the issue of Iraqi debt. Secretary Baker will report directly to me and will lead an effort to work with the world's governments at the highest levels with international organizations and with the Iraqis in seeking the restructuring and reduction of Iraq's official debt. The future of the Iraqi people should not be mortgaged to the enormous burden of debt incurred to enrich Saddam Hussein's regime. This debt endangers Iraq's long-term prospects for political health and economic prosperity. The issue of Iraq debt must be resolved in a manner that is fair and that does not unjustly burden a struggling nation at its moment of hope and promise. James Baker's vast economic, political and diplomatic experience as a former Secretary of State and Secretary of the Treasury will help to forge an international consensus for an equitable and effective resolution of this issue.

(end text)

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Text: White House Condemns Terrorist Attack on Russian Train

(U.S. stands with Russian people in their fight against terrorism)

The White House condemned the terrorist suicide bombing on a commuter train in southern Russia December 5, saying that "no national, ethnic, religious or political cause can justify terrorist acts."

Following is the statement:

(begin text)

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
December 5, 2003

Statement by the Press Secretary

TERRORIST ACT IN YESSSENTUKI,
STAVROPOL REGION, RUSSIA ON
DECEMBER 5

The United States strongly condemns this terrorist act and all acts of terrorism. We extend our condolences to the families of the victims and hope for a full and speedy recovery for those injured. No national, ethnic, religious or political cause can justify terrorist acts. We stand with the Russian people in their fight against terrorism.

(end text)

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Text: Powell Meets with Geneva Initiative Drafters Beilin and Abed Rabbo

(Says road map provides "appropriate pathway" to peace)

Secretary of State Colin Powell met with former Israeli Justice Minister Yossi Beilin and former Palestinian Authority Minister for Information and Culture Yasser Abed Rabbo in Washington December 5 to discuss their Geneva Initiative for Middle East peace.

According to a December 5 statement released by State Department, Powell told both drafters of the initiative that the road map plan drawn up by the

United Nations, the European Union, Russia and the United States, "provides the appropriate pathway" to realize the vision of a two state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Powell called on the Palestinian leadership to eliminate terrorism and enact democratic reforms and on Israel to freeze its settlement activity and remove unauthorized outposts in the occupied territories, according to the statement.

Powell said "the United States remains actively engaged in promoting peace and hopes that private citizens' activities will improve cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians," according to the statement.

Following is the text of the statement by Deputy Spokesman Erel:

(begin text)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
December 5, 2003

STATEMENT BY J. ADAM ERELI, DEPUTY SPOKESMAN

Secretary Powell's Meeting with Drafters of Geneva Initiative

Secretary Powell met today with the Israeli and Palestinian initiators of the Geneva Initiative, and reaffirmed America's commitment to President Bush's vision, articulated on June 24, 2002 of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

The Secretary explained that the Quartet Roadmap provides the appropriate pathway for moving to the realization of that vision and that there are no shortcuts along the way. He stated that aspirations for peace and Palestinian statehood could be achieved only through committed efforts to end all terrorism and dismantle terrorist organizations, and promote genuine reform giving Palestinians new, democratic leadership. Similarly, Israel must meet its responsibilities under the roadmap, including removing unauthorized outposts and freezing settlement activity. The realization of this vision

requires the active engagement of all parties-Israel, the Palestinians, the Arab states, and the international community.

The Secretary stated that the United States remains actively engaged in promoting peace and hopes that private citizens' activities will improve cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians.

(end text)

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Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Transcript: Powell Remarks after Meeting with King Abdallah of Jordan

(Press availability Dec. 5: questions on Geneva Mideast peace initiative, China/Taiwan)

Secretary of State Colin Powell talked with reporters briefly after meeting with King Abdallah of Jordan at the State Department December 5.

Asked about his meeting with the framers of the Geneva Initiative for Middle East peace earlier that day, Powell said he had stressed "the primacy of the roadmap as the document that the sides agree upon at this moment. And it is still there, and I think it still is a basis to go forward."

He was also asked about his telephone conversation with Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing.

Following is a transcript of the press availability following Powell's meeting with King Abdallah:

(begin transcript)

U.S. Department of State

SECRETARY COLIN L. POWELL
REMARKS AFTER MEETING WITH KING
ABDALLAH OF JORDAN

C Street Entrance
Washington, DC

December 5, 2003
(5:00 p.m. EST)

SECRETARY POWELL: Good evening. I just had a good meeting with His Majesty, King Abdallah. As you might expect, we talked about our bilateral relationship. We talked about the issues of the day, the developments in Iraq. I expressed my appreciation to His Majesty for all the support that he has been providing to our efforts -- and I'll take one or two questions if there are any, otherwise I'll -

QUESTION: What's your read on the meeting with the Israeli and Palestinians?

SECRETARY POWELL: We -- it was a -- I thought it was a very good meeting. I had a chance to convey to them the primacy of the roadmap as the way forward... (pause for traffic noise) I had a chance to describe to them the primacy of the roadmap as the document that the sides agree upon at this moment. And it is still there, and I think it still is a basis to go forward.

But we welcome other ideas, and they had a chance to share with me the reason for the work that they had been doing and how they believe it can contribute to the process toward peace and how it is complementary to the roadmap. So it was a good discussion.

QUESTION: Is anything active on the Syrian front? An emissary there, perhaps, an American official or former official, because they have expressed some interest in getting in on the --

SECRETARY POWELL: We're in touch with the Syrians. We have representation in Damascus, but nothing else on that at the moment.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, could you tell us the -- give us some readout of your conversation with Chinese Foreign Minister this morning, please? Did he propose any final joint statement on the Chinese constant problems?

SECRETARY POWELL: Minister Li and I had a good discussion. We discussed the Taiwan Straits issue, as you might expect, and we had a discussion

about the progress we were making toward the next six-party meeting, which we hope will be in the not too distant future. And that was the extent of that conversation.

Thank you.

QUESTION: No firm date then, still, right?

SECRETARY POWELL: Not yet.

QUESTION: How alarmed are you about the talk between China and Taiwan over this idea of the referendum?

SECRETARY POWELL: I beg your pardon?

QUESTION: Is the rhetoric between Taiwan and China over the referendum getting alarming to you at all?

SECRETARY POWELL: No, not alarming. We hope that both sides will realize where their interests lie and be careful about what they say. And we reaffirmed to the Chinese again today, and we will when Premier Wen is here next week, that we remain totally committed to our One China policy, founded on the Three Communiqués, the Taiwan Relations Act, and we do not support an independent -- we do not support independence for Taiwan.

Thank you.

(end transcript)

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Transcript: Rumsfeld Pleased with Afghan Warlord Moves to Disarm

(Praises Provincial Reconstruction Teams for extending Kabul's influence)

After meeting with rival Afghan warlords Abdul Rashid Dostum and Atta Mohammed in Mazar-e-Sharif December 4, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald

Rumsfeld said he was pleased that the two had initiated the process of disarming and demobilizing their troops.

"Each of them has initiated that process. It is under way. And that is a very good thing," said Rumsfeld, speaking at a press availability at the U.K. Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Headquarters.

The Bush administration is welcoming the disarmament of Afghan regional militias as a step toward encouraging more national unity under the central government in Kabul.

Rumsfeld said the PRTs across the country were also helping to establish central government control outside of Kabul.

"It is a way of having the efforts of the transitional government and the Karzai administration felt and reflected outside of the capital city. And that's a good thing," he said.

The defense secretary praised the work of the PRTs, who are stationed in outlying provinces to provide security and perform reconstruction projects.

"There is no question but that they have made a very constructive contribution," he said.

Following is the transcript of Rumsfeld's remarks at the U.K. Provincial Reconstruction Team Headquarters in Mazar-e-Sharif:

(begin transcript)

U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript
Presenter: Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld
Thursday, December 4, 2003

Secretary Rumsfeld Press Availability in Afghanistan

(Press availability at the U.K. Provincial Reconstruction Team Headquarters, Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan.)

Question: This resurgence of Taliban activity in the south -- are you afraid that the Taliban are trying to make a comeback?

Rumsfeld: Am I afraid that the Taliban are trying to make a comeback? No, it is no great surprise that those who have been defeated and removed would like to come back. That's always been the case and they will not have that opportunity. To the extent that they assemble in anything more than ones and twos they'll find that that's the case and they'll be killed or captured.

Q: There was a suggestion recently that Osama bin Laden had been hiding out in a monastery in Quetta --

Rumsfeld: There is a suggestion nearly every day that somewhere in the world he's been spotted --

Q: President Karzai said that he'd been spotted in a mosque in Afghanistan, sir.

Rumsfeld: Is that a question or a statement?

Q: President Karzai said that he'd been spotted. Is that reliable intelligence as far as you're concerned --

Rumsfeld: You'd have to ask him.

Q: Is it time this man was captured?

Rumsfeld: Oh goodness! It would be wonderful if he were captured. Yes. Most of the militaries of the world are organized to fight armies, navies and air forces, not to track down single individuals. It's a difficult thing to do. And it will take time, but it will happen.

Q: Mr. Secretary, after your meeting here do you get any sense that these two generals will be accelerating their plans to disarm and demobilize?

Rumsfeld: Each of them has initiated that process. It is under way. And that is a very good thing. At what pace it will proceed, I guess, remains to be seen. We are pleased that they have agreed to do so and we are pleased that they have initiated it and we'll be attentive and encouraging as we go along to see it toward completion.

Q: Do you believe that PRTs such as this are working and are bringing the government outside of Kabul? Bringing the sovereignty of this country

into an area, such as northern Afghanistan, that has been racked by violence for two decades?

Rumsfeld: There is no question but that the circumstances in every part of this country are different from every other part. It is not a single circumstance for the country of Afghanistan. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams do not have a fixed template that then is imposed on an area. The ones that have been initiated are each different in their own way. They are doing things that fit the local circumstances. I would say that Colonel Davis and his team have done an outstanding job. There is no question but that they have made a very constructive contribution. And, in answer to your question about linkage to the central government, most certainly it is. It is a way of having the efforts of the transitional government and the Karzai Administration felt and reflected outside of the capital city. And that's a good thing.

(end transcript)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Transcript: Rumsfeld Praises New Freedoms in Afghanistan, NATO Presence

(Says NATO's deployment is an "enormous step" for the Alliance)

On his visit to Afghanistan two years after its liberation from Taliban forces, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld praised the political, economic and infrastructure reforms in the country.

"There has been truly remarkable progress of freedom and opportunity obviously and visibly taking root," said Rumsfeld, speaking at a news briefing in Kabul December 4 with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

Rumsfeld said NATO's assumption of command of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF) marks an "enormous step" for the organization, and the United States, as a NATO

member, will continue to play its role in providing security and reconstruction to the country.

"Never in the 50-year history of that organization have they ever been involved in anything outside of the NATO treaty area and this their first activity of this type is important for them," he said.

The United States, he said, "will continue to assist in a manner that is appropriate so that the Afghan people can set their country on a path towards democracy and freedom and economic opportunity for the people here." U.S. troops will participate in the NATO operations in Afghanistan, Rumsfeld said.

The defense secretary also commented on his meeting with rival Afghan warlords Abdul Rashid Dostum and Atta Mohammed in Mazar-e-Sharif December 4.

He said both had agreed to disarm their militias and turn over their heavy weaponry.

"There have already begun walking down that path and we certainly acknowledge that and encouraged it," he said.

Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/500/index.htm>

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Text: Ridge Says Cyber Security Is Critical to U.S. Infrastructure

(Homeland Security secretary promotes public-private partnerships)

Computer networks are essential to America's well being, says Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, and for that reason those networks and the infrastructures they support present an attractive target for terrorists.

Speaking to private sector representatives at the National Cyber Security Summit in Washington December 3, Ridge said terrorists "know, as do we, that a few lines of code could ultimately wreak as much havoc as a handful of bombs."

"A vast electronic nervous system operates much of our nation's physical infrastructure", Ridge said, adding "everything from electricity grids to banking transactions to telecommunications depends on secure, reliable cyber networks."

As part of its effort to enhance cyber security, the Department of Homeland Security created the National Cyber Security Division (NCSA), which is solely dedicated to the protection of U.S. cyber assets. Its role, Ridge said, is to assess emerging threats, issue timely warnings and "provide strong cyber security leadership ... all across this nation and in concert with nations around the globe. We must do this, in addition, to protecting our shorelines and borders from dangerous people and cargo."

Ridge said that the number of cyber-security incidents is on the rise, and that although many of these are the work of computer hackers, "we know the enemies of freedom use the same technology that hackers do, that we do. And we know that they are looking to strike in any manner that will cripple our society."

Before September 11, Ridge said, there was no coordination between different industrial sectors for sharing information related to critical infrastructure. Now, he said, the NCSA -- in partnership with Carnegie Mellon -- has created the U.S. Computer Emergency Response Team (U.S. CERT) Web site where all who access it "will be able to stay informed and improve security practices."

Any computer, whether in a corporate building, a home office, or a dorm room, can represent a weak link, Ridge said, "because it only takes one vulnerable system to start a chain reaction that can lead to devastating results. As a result all Americans must take an active role in their own personal cyber security."

Through public education campaigns, public-private partnerships, and investments in groups such as the National Cyber Security Alliance, the Department of Homeland Security will reach more than 50 million Americans in the next three years, Ridge said.

"Eighty-five percent of our nation's critical infrastructure, including the cyber network that

controls it, is owned and operated by the private sector. As such, we not only need businesses to be active partners with us in securing these vital assets, we need businesses ... we need those of you here today to lead the way."

Achieving the goals of the summit will require strengthening the partnerships between his department and the private sector, Ridge said.

Full text is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/500/index.htm>

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Text: U.S. "Alarmed" at Targeting of Humanitarian Workers

(Nancy Kassebaum Baker speaks at Red Cross-Red Crescent conference)

The head of the U.S. delegation to the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has been "alarmed" at recent incidents in Baghdad in which humanitarian workers and civilian populations have been targeted. Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker said in Geneva December 3 that the attacks on the Red Cross offices and the United Nations are reminders of the dangers humanitarian workers face as they attempt to do good for others.

"It will take a united effort of governments, international, and non-governmental organizations to ensure that those providing humanitarian assistance are not themselves placed at undue risk," Baker said.

The theme of the meeting is "Protecting Human Dignity" and Baker described that as a succinct summary of the challenge facing the international community as it attempts to protect civilians in a time of terror.

Baker reaffirmed U.S. government support for the Red Cross-Red Crescent movement and extolled its persistent operations in even remote corners of the world.

Following is the text of Baker's statement as prepared for delivery:

(begin text)

Statement by Senator Nancy Landon Kassebaum Baker

Head of the United States Government Delegation
To the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

December 3, 2003

(as prepared for delivery)

Good morning. I would like to thank the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for their considerable efforts preparing for this conference.

I am particularly proud to head the United States Government delegation today because I have long been an admirer of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. But the work of the Movement extends in many directions: from ICRC's negotiations across battle lines to provide humanitarian assistance to civilian populations, to the Federation's efforts in partnership with national societies to prevent the spread of measles.

Like my fellow delegates, I have been an alarmed observer of recent incidents of blatant disrespect for the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, including the intentional targeting of humanitarian workers and civilian populations. At this unique time in history, we all face the same serious challenge of devising strategies to ensure the safety and security of innocent civilians in the fight against terrorism, while remaining true to our other core values. This year's Conference theme, "Protecting Human Dignity," is a succinct way to sum up those values. That is not as easy as it sounds, but if we remain truly focused on the goal of protecting human dignity, in all its facets, we will surely find ways to balance the diverging challenges of today's world.

The recent attacks in Baghdad on the offices of the ICRC and the UN were especially painful and tragic reminders of the threats humanitarian workers face on a regular basis. As President Bush has said, "Those who target relief workers for death have set themselves against all humanity." It will take a united effort of governments, international, and

non-governmental organizations to ensure that those providing humanitarian assistance are not themselves placed at undue risk.

The United States Government shares the concerns of the other delegations for the plight of those living with HIV/AIDS. In January of this year, President Bush announced the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, a five-year, \$15 billion initiative to turn the tide in combating the global HIV/AIDS pandemic. Specifically, the initiative is intended to prevent 7 million new infections, to treat 2 million HIV-infected people, and to care for 10 million HIV-infected individuals and AIDS orphans.

Only by working together on prevention, treatment and securing safe blood supplies can we make progress on addressing this severe and urgent health crisis. The Conference's focus on the stigma and discrimination faced by people living with HIV/AIDS is key to protecting human dignity, at the same time that we treat the disease.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement offers us perhaps the best statement of the common values that underpin all humanitarian work: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality. We call on Conference participants to ensure that the Movement remains true to its principles and continues its vigorous work towards making the Emblem an absolutely universal symbol of protection by adopting a third Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions. Only then will the Movement be truly universal.

One of the greatest strengths of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement is its universality. The Movement is working everywhere that people are needy - not just in the countries currently grabbing the world's attention. The United States is proud to support the International Committee of the Red Cross consistently in every country where it operates. We rely on the Movement to help those who are still suffering as a result of "forgotten conflicts," long after they are gone from the headlines.

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We applaud the Movement's focus on the needs of families whose members are missing as a result of

international or internal conflict. Many years after the fighting has ended, many families still do not know the fate or whereabouts of their loved ones. The plight of these families too has been forgotten. The United States acknowledges the compelling need of family members to learn the fate of their missing loved ones. Therefore, we vigorously support the registration of vulnerable populations and family reunification efforts.

The United States Government strongly supports the Conference goal of minimizing the impact of natural disasters by improving disaster preparedness, prevention and response. We have demonstrated our dedication to improving disaster prevention and response worldwide not only by committing significant financial resources, but also by committing our people on the ground. In particular, we are working to enhance early warning systems and to build local and global response capabilities. We look forward to continued partnership with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to achieve these common goals.

Finally, I would like to pay personal tribute to the people who make up the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the staff as well as the some 100 million volunteers working in more than 180 countries around the world. Their dedication to serving others, often at great personal risk, deserves our highest praise and deepest respect.

Since 1863, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement has offered hope, care, and trust to those caught in the tragedies wrought by man and nature. It is a legacy to be held high for those generations that will follow us.

Thank you very much.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

Fact Sheet: Biographical Data of U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad

(Khalilzad presented credentials to Afghan President Karzai Nov 27)

Following is fact sheet containing biographical information about U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad, an Afghan American:

(begin fact sheet)

Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad was nominated Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Afghanistan by President Bush on September 22, sworn on Monday, November 24, 2003 in Washington and presented this credentials to President Karzai on November 27, 2003.

Dr. Khalilzad served as Special Presidential Envoy to Afghanistan, a role he will retain after his assignment to Ambassador to Afghanistan ends. Dr. Khalilzad served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Islamic Outreach and Southwest Asia Initiatives at the National Security Council, and prior to that Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Southwest Asia, Near East, and North African Affairs at the National Security Council. He also has been a Special Presidential Envoy and Ambassador at Large for the Free Iraqis. Dr. Khalilzad headed the Bush-Cheney transition team for the Department of Defense and has been a Counselor to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld.

Between 1993 and 1999, Dr. Khalilzad was Director of the Strategy, Doctrine and Force Structure program for RAND's Project Air Force. While with RAND, he founded the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Between 1991 and 1992, Dr. Khalilzad served as Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Planning. Secretary Cheney awarded Dr. Khalilzad the Department of Defense medal for outstanding public service. He also served as a senior political scientist at RAND and an associate professor at the University of California at San Diego in 1989 and 1991. From 1985 to 1989 at the Department of State, Dr. Khalilzad served as Special Advisor to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs working policy issues, advising on the Iran-Iraq war and the Soviet War in Afghanistan. From 1979 to 1986, Dr. Khalilzad was an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Columbia University.

Dr. Khalilzad received his bachelor's and master's degree from the American University of Beirut, Lebanon. He went on to earn a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Dr. Khalilzad is the author of more than 200 books, articles, studies and reports. His work has been translated in many languages including Arabic, Chinese, German, Japanese and Turkish.

(end fact sheet)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Byliner: Commerce's Evans Says Steel Tariff Strategy Was Successful

(Commerce Secretary Don Evans op-ed column in The Wall Street Journal)

(This column by Don Evans, who is Commerce secretary, was published in the Wall Street Journal December 5 and is in the public domain. No republication restrictions.)

(begin byliner)

Victory
By Don Evans

Yesterday President Bush announced his decision to remove the temporary safeguard measures on steel imports that he put in place in March of 2002. This decision was made after an exhaustive study by the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC), intensive consultations with the steel industry and steel consumers, and a careful examination of the state of the global economy in which the steel industry operates. As he did in 2002, the president has made a sound decision for the American economy, its companies, and workers.

Prior to March 2002, the U.S. steel industry was faced with surging imports of foreign made steel, high costs, inefficient excess steelmaking capacity at home and abroad, and the lack of demand for steel in foreign markets. Decades of government ownership and subsidization of foreign steel mills

had greatly distorted this market, leading to an unlevel playing field that cost American jobs. After years of neglect, President Bush responded forcefully by announcing a three part plan that, in addition to launching negotiations to establish disciplines on government subsidies and working to reduce inefficient excess global steel capacity, included a temporary safeguard on steel imports, as authorized under U.S. trade law, to address these problems.

The president's plan has worked.

The industry's response to the safeguard has been exemplary. The temporary steel safeguard measures the president imposed over a year and a half ago were intended to provide the domestic industry with the breathing space needed to restructure and consolidate, thereby becoming stronger and more competitive. The steel industry has used this time wisely.

Companies and workers have reached groundbreaking collective bargaining agreements that will be models for the future. Steelmaking costs have been greatly reduced and dramatic gains in productivity have been achieved. Today, U.S. steelmakers, both integrated and mini mills, are among the most efficient producers in the world.

In addition, global steel markets have recovered from the ravages of the financial crises that marked the late 1990s. Demand in Asia and Russia has rebounded and China's consumption of steel has increased dramatically. As a result, the U.S. market is no longer alone as the destination of choice for excess foreign steel imports. Changes in pricing conditions in the United States and elsewhere now favor domestic production and U.S. sales to foreign markets. Steel prices have stabilized, imports are at their lowest level in a decade, and U.S. steel exports are at historic levels.

Given the positive changes in the global economy in the last 21 months and the significant adjustments undertaken by the U.S. steel industry, it became possible to lift the safeguard measures. President Bush recognized that the safeguard has given the industry the time it needed to regain its international competitiveness, while, as demonstrated by a recent

ITC report, having a minimal negative impact on the overall U.S. economy.

This president and his administration remain committed to America's steel industry and its workers. The successful efforts the industry has made in regaining its international competitiveness need to continue. To that end, the administration is taking several important actions to promote the health and viability of this critical industry:

-- We will continue to collect data on steel imports through our steel import licensing and monitoring program in order to respond quickly to import surges that could cause damage to the industry.

-- We will focus on the root causes of the inefficient overcapacity in global steelmaking by stepping up our efforts at the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development to establish new and stronger disciplines on subsidies that foreign governments grant to their steel producers.

-- We will continue to vigorously enforce our trade laws to ensure that U.S. industries and workers are not injured by unfairly traded imports and have an opportunity to compete on a level playing field with their foreign competitors. To this end, we have created an Unfair Trade Practices Team to monitor and respond to unfair trade practices on a global basis.

-- We will continue to pursue policies that create the conditions for the steel industry and all other U.S. manufacturers to succeed, including tackling skyrocketing health-care and legal costs, and reforming the energy sector to assure a stable supply for all manufacturers.

The period since the temporary steel safeguard measures were put in place has been marked by an historic adjustment in the steel industry and an improving economy in America and around the world. President Bush's temporary safeguard measures have successfully led to a revamped U.S. steel industry. America's steelworkers can be confident that they are part of a vibrant industry. Our industry and workers are once again poised to compete in the global marketplace with any foreign competitor for every sale in every market.

(Mr. Evans is Commerce secretary.)

(end byliner)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: End of U.S. Steel Tariffs Boosts Subsidy Talks, OECD Says

(Chances for reaching agreement in 2004 improved)

President Bush's decision to rescind tariffs imposed on steel imports in March 2002 gives a boost to international negotiations aimed at cutting trade-distorting subsidies for steel industries worldwide, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) says.

In a December 4 news release, Deputy Secretary General of the OECD Herwig Schlögl said that ending the steel safeguard measures improves the climate in the international steel trade and helps to rebuild trust in the multilateral system, thus "greatly" increasing the chances for reaching an agreement on subsidies in 2004.

The OECD noted that major steel-producing countries participating in the ongoing December 4-8 negotiating session on subsidies - the sixth since the talks started in December 2002 -- are discussing an enforcement mechanism, exceptions and ways to address the special needs of developing countries.

The Paris-based OECD, which has 30 member states, plays a prominent role in fostering open markets and good governance.

Following is the text of the news release:

(begin text)

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OECD Steel Subsidy Talks Given Boost

04/12/20023 -- OECD negotiations on steel were given a boost by President Bush, who today indicated that the US would be redoubling its efforts to advance the negotiations aimed at eliminating trade-distorting subsidies in steel. "This is a welcome development that will provide further impetus to the negotiations," says Herwig Schlögl, Deputy Secretary General of the OECD, who is chairing the OECD High Level Group overseeing the negotiations. "The lifting of the steel safeguard measures improves the climate in international steel trade and helps to rebuild trust into the multilateral system. I am confident that this view is shared by other participants in the OECD negotiations, and I believe that the chances of reaching an agreement in 2004 have greatly increased."

The High Level work on steel was initiated in the OECD in September 2001 to address issues related to the structural problems facing the industry, and the need to strengthen disciplines on government support to the industry. All major steel-producing economies (accounting for more than 90 percent of world steel production) are participating in the negotiations.

In December 2002, participants agreed to initiate negotiations on a subsidies agreement. Five negotiating sessions have since been held -- in February, May, June, July and October 2003. A sixth session is currently underway at OECD headquarters in Paris. Issues being considered at the current meeting (4-8 December) include notification and enforcement provisions related to support measures, exceptions, and ways to address the special needs of developing economies.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: U.S.-Turkey Joint Statement on Expanding Trade and Investment

(Released in conjunction with U.S.-Turkey Economic Partnership Commission meeting)

The United States and the Government of Turkey held a second session of the U.S.-Turkey Economic Partnership Commission December 2 in Washington. The Commission is a bilateral forum to strengthen economic and commercial relations between the two countries.

Following is a statement released in conjunction with the meeting reaffirming the United States' and Turkey's commitment to strengthening their bilateral economic relationship through expanded trade and investment:

[Note: in the following text, \$1 billion = \$1,000 million]

(begin text)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
December 5, 2003

Media Note

U.S.-TURKEY JOINT STATEMENT ON EXPANDING TRADE AND INVESTMENT

On December 2, the United States and the Government of Turkey held a second session of the U.S.-Turkey Economic Partnership Commission. The session highlighted the shared commitment of the two countries to strengthen our bilateral economic relationship and provided an opportunity for extensive discussion of trade and investment issues.

With the goal of expanding our bilateral trade (currently worth \$6.5 billion) and investment (U.S. investments in Turkey exceed \$1.8 billion), the United States agreed to consult with the Congress regarding the possibility of including Turkey in the Qualified Industrial Zone Initiative. Participation in the Qualified Industrial Zone program could help Turkey diversify its exports while fostering needed regional economic cooperation. The two countries also agreed to hold discussions at the expert level to remove non-tariff barriers that hinder U.S.-Turkish trade and investment, to honor the contractual rights of U.S. investors, and to continue working together on the effective protection of intellectual

property rights and to rationalize sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

U.S. interest in trade with and investment in Turkey has grown as the government of Turkey has implemented an economic reform program that has b

oosted growth and increased confidence. U.S. Export-Import Bank Board Director April Foley reviewed Export-Import Bank activities in Turkey, briefing the delegations on total Export-Import Bank exposure in Turkey of \$3 billion. Having provided substantial support to projects in the Turkish energy sector, the Export-Import Bank is interested in supporting needed investment as Turkey's telecommunications sector is privatized. The Export-Import Bank is also ready to assist Turkish firms participating in important regional reconstruction efforts.

Overseas Private Investment Corporation President Peter Watson outlined opportunities to increase the Cooperation's current \$1 billion exposure in Turkey, including several new regional and sectoral investment funds with an additional \$1.6 billion in total capital, supported by the Corporation and authorized to invest in Turkey. The parties agreed that one such fund aimed specifically at small and medium enterprises could provide important assistance in developing that sector in Turkey.

U.S. companies have invested in recent years in Turkey's power generation sector. The United States welcomes Turkish plans to deregulate domestic energy markets. The United States continues to urge the Turkish government to honor contractual commitments to these U.S. companies, a number of which invested with the support of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. The Turkish side expressed its readiness to consult with the U.S. companies on a solution without jeopardizing the contractual rights of the investors.

Finally, the United States and Turkey exchanged views on how to move forward the Doha Development Agenda. Both the United States and Turkey are committed to liberalizing the multilateral trading system and to re-energizing the negotiating process, building on Chairman Derbez's text of September 13, recognizing that flexibility and

political will are urgently needed to move the negotiations towards a successful conclusion. The United States and Turkey also agreed on the importance of regional trade agreements, which complement multilateral trade liberalization efforts.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: U.S.-Turkey Joint Statement on Strategic Energy Cooperation

(Released in conjunction with U.S.-Turkey Economic Partnership Commission meeting)

The United States and the Government of Turkey held a second session of the U.S.-Turkey Economic Partnership Commission December 2 in Washington. The Commission is a bilateral forum to strengthen economic and commercial relations between the two countries.

Following is a statement released in conjunction with the meeting reaffirming U.S.-Turkey strategic energy cooperation:

(begin text)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
December 5, 2003

Media Note

U.S.-TURKEY JOINT STATEMENT REAFFIRMING STRATEGIC ENERGY COOPERATION

In a meeting of the Economic Partnership Commission in Washington on December 2, the United States and Turkey reaffirmed that energy is a critical component of their strategic cooperation. The U.S. and Turkey have taken major strides in establishing the East-West Energy Corridor, which

will help bring the vast energy resources of the Caspian region to world markets.

The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline is the centerpiece of the East-West Corridor. The two delegations welcomed the commencement of construction in April 2003 on the one-million-barrel-per-day, 1,760 km pipeline, which is now more than 40 percent complete. The first oil from this pipeline will be delivered to world markets in 2005.

The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project recently received affirmation from the International Financial Institutions and U.S. lending and development institutions. The Boards of the International Financial Corporation and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, on November 4, 2003 and November 11, 2003, respectively, each approved up to \$310 million in total lending packages. Their support includes \$155 million in direct loans for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project and the oil field that will supply the pipeline, and \$155 million through commercially syndicated loans.

U.S. institutions echoed this support for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project. The Overseas Private Investment Corporation Board approved up to \$125 million in political risk insurance on November 14, 2003, and the Export-Import Bank Board approved financing for \$160 million in support of U.S. exports during its November 21, 2003 meeting.

These votes are evidence of the strong U.S. and international support for this benchmark energy project, and recognition of the significant work that has been done in terms of environment and social assessments.

Construction is set to begin next year on the parallel South Caucasus gas pipeline, running from Azerbaijan to Erzurum in central Turkey. Initially, the pipeline is expected to bring 6.6 billion cubic meters of competitively priced Azeri gas to Turkey, and onward to possible markets in Western Europe, in 2006.

The United States remains firmly committed to both the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and South Caucasus gas pipelines and welcomes Turkey's essential involvement in both efforts. These routes not only diversify world energy supplies, but also strengthen

the sovereignty, economic viability and stability of the nations in the region, promote trade and investment opportunities for U.S. companies, and support Turkey in minimizing environmental risks to the Turkish Straits.

The U.S. and Turkey also are working to identify European markets for surplus gas and new gas volumes from the Caspian. With European gas growth expected to reach up to 200 billion [200,000 million] cubic meters over the next 15 years, there will be strong demand opportunities for new suppliers. Turkey is well positioned to serve as central transit supplier for this burgeoning European demand.

The U.S. government is supporting Turkey and Greece in their efforts to link their gas systems via the Greek-Turkish Inter-connector, the first step in developing European markets. Other possible onward markets include Italy, or Bulgaria and Romania.

The Turkish government has expressed concern about increased shipping traffic through the Turkish Straits. The United States shares their concern about shipping safety in the Straits and is pleased with the introduction of the Vessel Traffic System to protect the environment, historical buildings and Istanbul's 12 million inhabitants.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: U.S.-Turkey Joint Statement on Intensifying Regional Cooperation

(Released in conjunction with U.S.-Turkey Economic Partnership Commission meeting)

The United States and the Government of Turkey held a second session of the U.S.-Turkey Economic Partnership Commission December 2 in Washington. The Commission is a bilateral forum to

strengthen economic and commercial relations between the two countries.

During the meeting, the United States and Turkey reviewed the success of their cooperation and business partnerships in Afghanistan and Central Asia and discussed cooperation to promote stability and economic development in Iraq. The two countries share the goal of increasing their economic cooperation in Central Asia and Afghanistan to promote freer trade and development in the region.

Following is a joint statement released in conjunction with the meeting:

(begin text)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
December 5, 2003

Media Note

U.S.-TURKEY JOINT STATEMENT ON INTENSIFYING REGIONAL COOPERATION

In a meeting of the Economic Partnership Commission in Washington on December 2, the United States and Turkey reviewed the success of their cooperation and business partnerships in Afghanistan and Central Asia and discussed current and future cooperation to promote stability and economic development in Iraq. Construction of the almost complete Kabul-Kandahar road in Afghanistan by Turkish firms is a prime example of this close and successful cooperation. The United States and Turkey share the goal of increasing their economic cooperation in Central Asia and Afghanistan to promote freer trade and development in the region.

Turkey is already making a significant contribution to the reconstruction of Iraq, including through the supply of electricity, petroleum products and humanitarian assistance. The United States and Turkey agreed to discuss improved transportation links between Turkey and Iraq, the possible provision of additional electrical power to Iraq from Turkey, and an enhanced role for Turkish firms in rebuilding Iraq. In January 2004, the U.S.

Department of Commerce will host a series of conferences on Iraq reconstruction in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir.

The United States and Turkey agreed to build on recent visits by Iraqi officials to Ankara to streamline border-crossing operations and to secure the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline. The achievements from U.S.-Turkey cooperation in Afghanistan and Central Asia provide the model for future success in reconstructing Iraq.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: U.S., EU Applaud New Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue Leadership

(Coca-Cola, Unilever officials co-chair business group)

The United States and the European Union have welcomed the announcement that Douglas Daft, CEO of the Coca-Cola Company, and Niall FitzGerald, chairman of Unilever PLC, will serve as co-chairs of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TABD) for 2004-5.

The TABD is a mechanism for business leaders to provide recommendations to their governments to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of transatlantic trade.

Creating a more competitive and integrated marketplace "cannot occur without continual dialogue between businesses and governments," said U.S. Commerce Secretary Don Evans.

Erkki Liikanen, EU Commissioner for Enterprise, said input from the TABD "is key in our further efforts to reduce barriers to transatlantic trade and to increase market access in both directions."

Following is a Department of Commerce press release:

(begin text)

Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C.
HYPERLINK "<http://www.commerce.gov>"

December 4, 2003

U.S. AND EU APPLAUD NEW TABD LEADERSHIP

Brussels/Washington - U.S. Secretary of Commerce Donald L. Evans and EU Commissioner for Enterprise Erkki Liikanen expressed strong support for today's announcement that Douglas N. Daft, CEO of The Coca-Cola Company, and Niall FitzGerald, Chairman of Unilever PLC, will be co-chairs of the Transatlantic Business Dialogue (TABD) for 2004-5.

"The best way for the U.S. and Europe to improve economic growth is to create a more competitive and integrated marketplace," said Secretary Evans. "This cannot occur without continual dialogue between businesses and governments."

"I am pleased with Mr FitzGerald and Mr Daft taking the lead in the TABD process," said European Commissioner Liikanen. "The European Commission endorses this process and is committed to making it a success with concrete results." He continued: "Input from the TABD is key in our further efforts to reduce barriers to transatlantic trade and to increase market access in both directions. This is crucial for enhancing the competitiveness of our intertwined economies."

The first meeting of the TABD will be in Davos, Switzerland on the margins of the World Economic Forum January 21-25. CEO Daft and Chairman FitzGerald, in their official capacity as TABD chairmen, will meet with Secretary Evans on December 5, 2003 to discuss their vision for TABD.

Through the TABD, business leaders provide recommendations to the U.S. and EU government to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of the transatlantic marketplace. Since 1995, the TABD has played a crucial role in fostering the exchange of ideas and promoting constructive solutions in U.S.-EU issues. TABD focuses on ways to lower

transaction costs for businesses and minimizing friction between the U.S. and EU governments.

The United States and the European Union have an economic relationship of over \$2 trillion, and two-way trade of approximately \$370 billion.

Contact: Curt Cultice (202) 482-3809

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: Brighter Economic Future in Store for Japan, Taylor Says

(Treasury Under Secretary's Dec. 5 remarks to Japan Society)

The signs are good that Japan will be able to pull itself out of its economic doldrums, says John B. Taylor, under secretary of Treasury for international affairs.

"There are clear signs that things have changed in Japan," he told the Japan Society in New York December 5. "The building blocks for sustained, robust economic growth are being established."

The Treasury official acknowledged that further reform efforts will be needed "across the spectrum of economic policy" to ensure stronger growth. But, he added, "as the Koizumi Government continues to implement banking, regulatory, and other reform measures, a brighter economic future is in store."

Taylor said the most important reason for optimism is the Bank of Japan's shift in March 2001 to a policy of sharply raising base money growth -- and maintaining this policy until deflation is eliminated. There is evidence, Taylor said, that this more aggressive approach may be starting to pay off.

Taylor said he agrees with those who say the Bank of Japan should wait some time before raising interest rates above zero and abandoning its current policy of strong monetary base increases.

"Inflation is barely positive," Taylor said. "It is still well below common measures of price stability. There is still excess capacity. Standard monetary policy guidelines suggest that the interest rate should be held at zero until price stability is more firmly established and output grows much closer to potential. Both will take time."

A key reason for optimism about the sustainability of the current recovery, the under secretary said, is the recent progress in bank and corporate sector reforms. On the corporate side, firms have strengthened their balance sheets by paying down debt, Taylor said.

"Another good sign," he said, "is that, unlike past recoveries that depended heavily on public works spending, this time growth has been led by the private sector."

Taylor said not all indicators are positive, and he noted that Japanese economic prospects are still highly dependent on exports. "For a durable recovery, Japan needs more balanced growth where domestic spending grows with income," he said. "This is why the structural reform and deregulation agenda of the Koizumi administration is so important. ... Progress in retail deregulation has allowed far more competition, with benefits for consumers and the economy as a whole."

Taylor urged Japanese leadership to maintain "economic flexibility -- the ability to respond to price signals both in the domestic and world economy, and to shift resources to most productive uses" -- and to deal with the problem of non-performing loans. He noted that "[u]nresolved loan claims have created an overhang of land, capital, and labor locked in unproductive activities that blocks resource mobility and discourages investment."

According to Taylor, policymakers in Japan "now recognize that fiscal stimulus is not the key to sustained growth." Taylor credited the Koizumi administration with changing "the way in which people view government spending" and with focusing attention on "how to achieve a primary budget balance over time."

"A credible, transparent multi-year framework for restoring public finances would do much to ease the pain of fiscal consolidation in Japan, and increase the public's confidence in the future," he said.

Full text is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/500/index.htm>

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**Transcript: State Department Briefing,
December 5, 2003**

*(Israel/Palestinians, India/Pakistan, Syria/Israel, Iraq, Nigeria/Liberia,
Russia, Cuba, Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan)*

State Department Deputy Spokesman J. Adam Ereli briefed.

Following is a transcript of the briefing:

(begin transcript)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DAILY PRESS BRIEFING
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2003
(ON THE RECORD UNLESS OTHERWISE
NOTED)

1:55 p.m. EST

BRIEFER: J. Adam Ereli, Deputy Spokesman

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MR. ERELI: Good afternoon, everybody. Sorry for the delay.

We'll be putting out a statement following the briefing on the Secretary's meeting with the drafters of the Geneva Initiative. It was a good, constructive meeting with this private group who has drafted a private plan. It provided a good opportunity for us to listen to their ideas.

The Secretary reaffirmed America's commitment to President Bush's vision articulated on June 24th, 2002, of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. He also explained that the Quartet roadmap provides the appropriate pathway for moving to the realization of that vision and that there are no shortcuts along the way.

He stated that the aspirations for peace and Palestinian statehood could be achieved only through committed efforts to end all terrorism and dismantle terrorist organizations, and promote genuine reform, giving Palestinians new and democratic leadership. Similarly, we made the point that Israel must meet its responsibilities under the roadmap.

The drafters of the Initiative pointed out that this document is complementary to the roadmap. It is intended to help the roadmap to be implemented.

It is designed to strengthen the credibility of the roadmap with the peoples of both countries and the region as a whole. And they also made the point that it contributed to a renewed discussion of the peace process in general.

So, in sum, I guess I would say it was a good and interesting discussion and we welcome it.

Full transcript is available at
<http://www.usemb.se/wireless/500/index.htm>

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Text: U.S., Russia Formalize Efforts to Prevent Oil Spills

(Dec. 4 workshop in Moscow implements cooperative arrangement)

At a workshop in Moscow December 4, the United States and Russia formalized an arrangement for sharing information and technologies on preventing or responding to oil spills.

An Energy Department press release said the cooperative effort demonstrates the two countries' "common commitment to environmentally sustainable development and transport of oil." It also said the next workshop is scheduled to be held in Trondheim, Norway, in June 2004 in conjunction with an international conference on oil spill prevention and response.

Following is the release:

(begin text)

Department of Energy
Washington, D.C.
www.energy.gov
December 4, 2003

U.S. AND RUSSIA IMPLEMENT OIL SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PROTOCOL

Will Improve Clean-up Efforts and Environmental Standards in Both Countries

WASHINGTON, DC -- U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation Alexander R. Vershbow and Russian Deputy Energy Minister Oleg G. Gordeyev today opened the first U.S.-Russian Energy Workshop on Oil Spill Prevention and Response in Moscow. The workshop is the culmination of agreements signed by U.S. Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and Russian Minister of Energy Igor Yusufov to discuss energy issues of interest to both countries and to implement the oil spill prevention and response agreement the two countries developed over the past year.

"Today's workshop, the first of its kind, will help establish a stronger professional and scientific bond between Russia and the United States," Secretary of Energy Abraham said. "Russia's interest in oil spill prevention and response and their growing participation in international oil markets make this workshop a vital tool in enhancing the world's energy security. Even better, the workshop will allow us to protect the environment while guaranteeing continued production and use of oil and oil products."

Secretary Abraham also announced the formation of an interagency working group comprised of the Departments of Transportation, Commerce, and Energy, along with the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Coast Guard, to address and implement the primary areas for future cooperation.

The original proposal, signed in March, was developed at Minister Yusufov's request and recommended extensive mutual assistance from both countries in the areas of technology, logistics, training, regulatory issues and exchange programs. It also recognized their common commitment to environmentally sustainable development and transport of oil. Today's action formalizes the arrangement, and implements the plan. The next workshop is scheduled to be held in June in Trondheim, Norway in conjunction with the "Interspill" international conference on oil spill prevention and response.

Through interactions brought about by the workshop, the U.S. and Russia will share ideas, information, technologies and methods in support of helping both countries increase the effectiveness of their oil spill regulation, prevention and response.

Media Contact(s): Jeanne Lopatto, 202/586-4940
Drew Malcomb, 202/586-5806 Number: R-03-283

(end text)

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Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: No Doubt of Human Impact on Global Climate, Scientists Say

(Industrial emissions are dominant influence on climate change, research shows)

Two U.S. atmospheric scientists, citing atmospheric observations and computer model experiments by climate scientists, say there is no longer any doubt that human activities are having measurable -- and increasing -- impacts on global climate.

A December 2 press release from the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) says their study, which appears in the December 5 issue of the journal *Science*, paints a detailed picture of climate changes likely to buffet Earth in coming decades, including rising temperatures and an increase in extreme weather events such as flooding and drought.

"There is no doubt that the composition of the atmosphere is changing because of human activities, and today greenhouse gases are the largest human influence on global climate," write Thomas Karl, director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Climatic Data Center, and Kevin Trenberth, head of the Climate Analysis Section at NCAR.

The scientists conclude that industrial emissions have been the dominant influence on climate change for the past 50 years, overwhelming natural forces. Levels of carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas that traps solar radiation and warms the planet, have risen by 31 percent since pre-industrial times -- from 280 parts per million by volume (ppmv) to over 370 ppmv today.

Other human activities, such as emissions of sulfate and soot particles and the development of urban areas, have significant but more localized climate impacts, the authors report.

They estimate that, between 1990 and 2100, there is a 90 percent probability that global temperatures will rise by 1.7 to 4.9 degrees Celsius. Such warming would have widespread impacts on society and the environment, including continued melting of glaciers and the great ice sheets of Greenland, inundating the world's coasts.

Karl and Trenberth say more research is needed to pin down both the global and regional impacts of climate change. This, in turn, will require considerable international cooperation and the establishment of a global climate monitoring system to collect and analyze data.

Following is the text of the press release:

(begin text)

National Center for Atmospheric Research
December 2, 2003

"No Doubt" Human Activity Is Affecting Global Climate, Top Scientists Conclude

BOULDER-Two of the nation's premier atmospheric scientists, after reviewing extensive research by their colleagues, say there is no longer any doubt that human activities are having measurable-and increasing-impacts on global climate. Their study cites atmospheric observations and multiple computer models to paint a detailed picture of climate changes likely to buffet Earth in coming decades, including rising temperatures and an increase in extreme weather events, such as flooding and drought. The study appears December 5 in *Science* as part of the journal's "State of the Planet" series.

The coauthors-Thomas Karl, director of NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, and Kevin Trenberth, head of the Climate Analysis Section at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR)-conclude that industrial emissions have been the dominant influence on climate change for the past 50 years, overwhelming natural forces. The

most important of these emissions is carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that traps solar radiation and warms the planet.

"There is no doubt that the composition of the atmosphere is changing because of human activities, and today greenhouse gases are the largest human influence on global climate," they write. "The likely result is more frequent heat waves, droughts, extreme precipitation events, and related impacts, e.g., wildfires, heat stress, vegetation changes, and sea-level rise which will be regionally dependent."

The article cites research indicating that, between 1990 and 2100, there is a 90 percent probability that global temperatures will rise by 1.7 to 4.9 degrees Celsius (3.1 to 8.9 degrees Fahrenheit), because of human influences on climate. Such warming would have widespread impacts on society and the environment, including continued melting of glaciers and the great ice sheets of Greenland, inundating the world's coasts. The authors base their estimate on computer model experiments by climate scientists, observations of atmospheric changes, and recorded climate changes over the past century.

However, there is still large uncertainty in understanding the global climate and how it will change, says Karl. If temperatures rise 1.7 degrees, the expected changes would be relatively small, whereas a 4.9-degree increase could bring drastic impacts, some of which may be unforeseen.

Carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have risen by 31 percent since pre-industrial times, from 280 parts per million by volume (ppmv) to over 370 ppmv today. Other human activities, such as emissions of sulfate and soot particles and the development of urban areas, have significant but more localized climate impacts. Such activities may enhance or mask the larger-scale warming from greenhouse gases, but not offset it, according to the authors.

If societies could successfully cut emissions and stabilize carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, temperatures would still increase by an estimated 0.5 degree C (0.9 degree F) over a period of decades, Karl and Trenberth warn. This is because greenhouse gases are slow to cycle out of the atmosphere. "Given what has happened to date and

is projected in the future, significant further climate change is guaranteed," the authors state.

If current emissions continue, the world would face the fastest rate of climate change in at least the last 10,000 years. This could potentially alter ocean current circulations and radically change existing climate patterns. Moreover, certain natural processes would tend to accelerate the warming. For example, as snow cover melts away, the darker land and water surface would absorb more solar radiation, further increasing temperatures.

Karl and Trenberth say more research is needed to pin down both the global and regional impacts of climate change. Scientists, for example, have yet to determine the temperature impacts of increased cloud cover or how changes in the atmosphere will influence El Niño, the periodic warming of Pacific Ocean waters that affects weather patterns throughout much of the world. The authors call for multiple computer model studies to address the complex aspects of weather and climate. The models must be able to integrate all components of Earth's climate system-physical, chemical, and biological. This, in turn, will require considerable international cooperation and the establishment of a global climate monitoring system to collect and analyze data.

Because of the broad range of potential change in temperature, it's extremely important to ensure that we have a comprehensive observing system to track unforeseen changes and variations, says Karl.

"Climate change is truly a global issue, one that may prove to be humanity's greatest challenge," the authors conclude. "It is very unlikely to be adequately addressed without greatly improved international cooperation and action."

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: Environment Agency Announces New Emissions Limits on Coal-Burning Plants*(Regulations expected to achieve largest emissions reductions in a decade)*

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced a proposal to require coal-burning power plants to make the steepest emissions cuts in more than a decade by reducing the amount of smog and soot-forming chemicals released from their smokestacks.

A December 4 press release says the Interstate Air Quality Rule would require power plants to upgrade their facilities to significantly reduce soot-causing sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, a precursor to smog. EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt said the new regulations, plus recent agency proposals to reduce mercury emissions from coal-burning power plants, "are the largest single investment in any clean air program in history" -- requiring utilities to spend tens of billions of dollars to reduce the emissions.

The level of pollution reductions called for by the latest proposed regulations and the strategy for achieving it mirror closely proposals the administration offered Congress nearly two years ago in its so-called Clear Skies initiative. That legislation is still under debate in Congress.

"While we continue to believe that the Clear Skies Act is the best approach to reducing power plant emissions, and we are committed to working with our congressional sponsors to move this landmark legislation through Congress, we must move forward with these steps now," Leavitt said.

Like Clear Skies, the new regulations would provide utilities with a so-called cap-and-trade pollution trading system that allows plants unable to meet their required reductions to buy emission allowances from other plants that have exceeded the required cuts.

Cumulatively, the rules announced by EPA will eliminate 34 million tons of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides between now and 2015 beyond the reductions achieved under current programs, EPA said. Sulfur dioxide emissions would be cut by approximately 70 percent and nitrogen oxides by approximately 50 percent from today's levels in the 30 states covered under the rules. The proposed

rules for mercury -- a substance that causes neurological problems in humans -- would reduce emissions to 15 tons when fully implemented after 2018, a reduction of 70 percent from current levels.

EPA will formally propose the Interstate Air Quality Rule in December 2003 and then take public comment. A final rule is planned for 2005. The mercury rules will be proposed by December 15.

Following is the text of the press release:

(begin text)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
December 4, 2003

New Power Plant Rule to Achieve Largest Emission Reductions in a Decade

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced a proposal to require coal-burning power plants to make the steepest emissions cuts in over a decade. The "Interstate Air Quality Rule" will require power plants to upgrade their facilities to reduce sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x).

This announcement is in addition to agency proposals to reduce mercury emissions from coal-burning power plants. Taken together, these rules will require utilities to spend tens of billions of dollars to reduce the emissions of these pollutants. The results will be improved public health, ecosystems, and visibility.

"These actions are the largest single investment in any clean air program in history," said EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt. "Together, these programs represent a historic achievement in meeting our new, more stringent national air quality standards and reducing harmful mercury emissions."

"While we continue to believe that the Clear Skies Act is the best approach to reducing power plant emissions, and we are committed to working with our congressional sponsors to move this landmark legislation through Congress, we must move forward with these steps now," Leavitt added.

A major focus of the rule is to proactively provide states with the strongest tools possible to help them meet the new health-based air quality standards, without harming their local economies.

The rules focus on states that significantly contribute to ozone and fine particle pollution in the Eastern United States. These rules would reduce power plant emissions in two phases. Sulfur dioxide emissions would drop by 3.7 million tons by 2010 (a cut of approximately 40 percent from current levels) and by another 2.3 million tons when the rules are fully implemented after 2015 (a total cut of nearly 70 percent from today's levels). NOx emissions would be cut by 1.4 million tons by 2010 and by a total of 1.7 million tons by 2015 (a reduction of approximately 50 percent from today's levels in the 30 states covered under the rules). Cumulatively, the rules will eliminate approximately 34 million tons of SO2 and NOx emissions between now and 2015 beyond the reductions achieved under current programs. Moreover, emissions will be permanently capped and cannot increase.

The proposed mercury rules would focus on coal-fired power plants primarily; the proposed cap-and-trade alternative would cut mercury emissions to 15 tons when fully implemented after 2018, a reduction of 70% from current levels.

The complete plan will consist of a set of new rules to cut the long-range transport of two gases called sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. Mercury is also transported long distances, and the Agency will propose two alternative control plans, one of which will be a proven, market-based cap-and-trade approach that has demonstrated its ability to cut emissions faster and at less cost.

SO2 and NOx can be transported on the wind, causing environmental and health problems hundreds of miles away. SO2 and NOx emissions contribute to the formation of fine particles, which can pose serious health risks, especially for people with heart or lung disease (including asthma) and older adults and children. NOx emissions also contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone, which poses risks for people with lung diseases and children and adults who are active outdoors.

Ozone can irritate the respiratory system, aggravate asthma, reduce lung capacity and increase people's susceptibility to respiratory illnesses like pneumonia and bronchitis.

Mercury is a highly toxic substance that can impair cognitive and motor skills and can impair reproductive, immune and endocrine systems in unborn children.

EPA will formally propose the Interstate Air Quality Rule in December 2003 and then take public comment. A final rule is planned for 2005. The mercury rules will be proposed by December 15.

(end text)

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Text: U.S. Notes Anniversary of Cuban Dissident's Arrest

(Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet was first victim of recent Cuban crackdown)

The United States is noting the one-year anniversary of the arrest of Cuban dissident Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, says State Department deputy spokesman Adam Ereli.

In a December 5 statement, Ereli noted that Biscet and nine other members of his opposition group were arrested on December 6, 2002, for attempting to organize an event in Cuba to commemorate Human Rights Day.

Ereli indicated that Biscet was the first victim in the March 2003 crackdown on dissidents by the regime of Cuban dictator Fidel Castro.

Following is the text of Ereli's statement, with further details:

(begin text)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman

December 5, 2003

STATEMENT BY J. ADAM ERELI, DEPUTY
SPOKESMAN

U.S. Notes One-Year Anniversary of the Arrest of
Cuban Dissident Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet

The United States notes the one-year anniversary of the arrest of Cuban dissident Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, who was detained December 6, 2002, along with nine other members of his opposition group, for attempting to organize an event to commemorate Human Rights Day. We again call for the immediate release of Dr. Biscet and the hundreds of other political prisoners in Cuba.

Like so many other leading members of Cuba's nascent civil society, Dr. Biscet has been subjected to systematic harassment and abuse by Cuban state security. After having served three years in prison on trumped-up charges of public disorder, he was released a year ago, then was again arrested. Biscet was held until April, when he was charged and tried with the 75 prisoners of conscience convicted in regime show trials.

Biscet's real "crime" was to attempt to teach others about international human rights practices in a country where such fundamental rights are routinely ignored by the government. Recently, he was forced to serve 21 days in a punishment cell for assisting both common prisoners and other political prisoners in demanding recognition of their fundamental rights. We applaud Dr. Biscet's courage in the face of overwhelming odds and extreme adversity.

Sadly, Dr. Biscet turned out to be only the first victim of one of the most severe crackdowns the Castro regime has unleashed on civil society since the beginning of the revolution. In March of this year, another 75 independent journalists, librarians, and human rights defenders were arrested, subjected to sham trials, and sentenced to lengthy prison terms for exercising fundamental, internationally protected rights.

We express our admiration for the wife and family of Dr. Biscet, and the families of all Cuban political prisoners, for their courage in keeping the world

aware of the plight of Cuba's pro-democracy activists. Their activities, such as obtaining thousands of signatures for the Varela Project, which calls for a referendum on political and economic reforms, demonstrate the capacity of the Cuban people to overcome fear and promote a peaceful transition to democracy.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.
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**Text: Statement of NATO-Russia Council
Foreign Ministers Dec. 4**

(Reiterates commitment to common approaches to shared threats)

The NATO-Russia Council (NRC), meeting in foreign minister session, issued a statement in Brussels December 4 reiterating a commitment to "an intensified and growing partnership between NATO member states and Russia" based on the development of common approaches to shared threats.

The statement stressed that the NRC "should continue to make a substantial and positive contribution to the security of all peoples in the Euro-Atlantic area."

The foreign ministers welcomed "Russia's offer to provide practical support to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan," and stated their support for Afghan reconstruction, security sector reform, the fight against drug trafficking, and ensuring effective border controls.

The statement welcomed steps toward reconciliation and regional cooperation in southeast Europe, and expressed support for the efforts of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to stabilize Kosovo.

The ministers also endorsed a statement made earlier in the week in Brussels by NATO defense

ministers which addressed practical cooperation on a range of

issues of mutual interest including the war on terrorism, defense reform, interoperability among NATO and Russian forces, possible NATO-Russia peacekeeping operations, civil emergencies, and procedures for handling nuclear weapons safely.

Following is the text of the NATO-Russia Council statement:

(begin text)

NATO Headquarters
Press Release
4 Dec. 2003

STATEMENT
MEETING OF THE NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL
AT THE LEVEL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS

We, the Foreign Ministers of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), meeting today in Brussels, reiterated our commitment to an intensified and growing partnership between NATO member states and Russia, based on the development, in the spirit of the Rome Declaration, of common approaches to shared threats. We reiterated our determination to follow up on our Madrid statement. With this goal in mind, we confirmed our commitment to strengthen further the practical capabilities that will enable the NRC to achieve its full potential. Looking forward to the second anniversary of the NRC, we reiterated our determination that the NRC should continue to make a substantial and positive contribution to the security of all peoples in the Euro-Atlantic area.

The NRC reaffirmed its determination to continue and broaden its political dialogue on a range of important security issues in the Euro-Atlantic area, including emerging crises, with a view to promoting common positions and determining optimal common approaches and possible joint actions.

We remain committed to helping Afghanistan achieve lasting stability, and welcomed the results of ongoing consultations in the NRC. We welcomed in particular Russia's offer to provide practical support to the NATO-led International Security Assistance

Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. We also underlined our support for ongoing Afghan and international efforts for reconstruction, security sector reform, the fight against drug trafficking and ensuring effective border controls.

We welcomed concrete NRC political initiatives to encourage reform in the defence and other sectors in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to promote effective border control in South-Eastern Europe. We commended Serbia and Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, for their steps toward reconciliation and regional co-operation, as well as for the reforms they are carrying out, including in the defence sector. We expect that both countries will continue their reform processes in order to become integral parts of the Euro-Atlantic family of nations. The NRC stands by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in his efforts to stabilise Kosovo and to assist in creating conditions conducive to progress on the internationally endorsed standards for Kosovo, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1244. We stressed the need for full co-operation throughout the region with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), including by bringing all indictees to justice, in accordance with all relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

We fully associated ourselves with the statement made by our Defence Minister colleagues at their meeting earlier this month in Brussels. We welcomed the significant progress achieved in all areas of practical co-operation, including in particular:

- further work on practical aspects of our fight against terrorism, building on agreed threat assessments;
- the broadening and deepening of NRC co-operation on defence reform; the intensification of NRC military-to-military co-operation and efforts to develop interoperability among NATO and Russian forces;
- progress made to date in implementation of the ongoing NATO-Russia Procedural Exercise, designed to address modalities for possible NATO-Russia Peacekeeping Operations, as well as other

work aimed at improving our co-operation on peacekeeping;

- intensified co-operation in coping with civil emergencies, including Russia's invitation to NRC member states to participate in the exercise "Kaliningrad 2004";

- ongoing dialogue and co-operation on a range of nuclear issues, including Russia's invitation to NRC countries to observe a field exercise on safe handling procedures for nuclear weapons;

- the development of an experimental concept of TMD operations and the scheduling of a related Command Post Exercise in early 2004; and approval of the Co-operative Airspace Initiative Project Plan.

Determined to continue the intensification of our efforts in these and other areas, we approved a robust and forward-looking NRC Work Programme for 2004.

We looked forward to the early completion of a joint assessment of global trends in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery as a first and significant step towards a comprehensive and regular exchange of views among NRC countries. We agreed to continue broadening the current NATO-Russia non-proliferation dialogue and to further explore possibilities for practical co-operation.

Finally, we reaffirmed our commitment to ensure security and stability in Europe. We reiterated our determination to continue to work co-operatively toward ratification and entry into force of the adapted CFE Treaty. In this context, we recalled the importance and continued validity of our Madrid statement, and reaffirmed our readiness to pursue our work on this basis.

We thanked Lord Robertson of Port Ellen for his important contribution in establishing a new quality of relations between NATO member states and Russia. We expressed confidence that the new Chairman of the NATO-Russia Council, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, will continue to carry forward this relationship and build on the NRC's record of success.

(end text)

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Text: NATO-Ukraine Commission Foreign Ministers Meet Dec. 5

(Calls for practical implementation of civil and military reforms in Ukraine)

The NATO-Ukraine Commission met in foreign minister session in Brussels December 5 and issued a statement emphasizing their commitment to long-term stability across the Euro-Atlantic region and their common interest in fighting terrorism.

In a presentation to the meeting, Ukraine Foreign Minister Gryshchenko [Kostyantyn Hryshchenko] gave an update on political, economic, and military and defense sector reforms in his country.

The foreign ministers' statement noted that Gryshchenko said Ukraine would carry forward these reforms in 2004 and would "intensify its efforts to strengthen democracy, the rule of law, freedom of speech and the media, the separation of powers, and judicial independence."

The NATO ministers expressed appreciation for Ukraine's efforts while stressing that "more remains to be done to ensure the practical implementation of reforms." Further progress "would be key to ensuring Ukraine's success in the process of Euro-Atlantic integration."

Following is the statement:

(begin text)

NATO Headquarters
Press Release
5 December 2003

MEETING OF THE NATO-UKRAINE
COMMISSION AT THE LEVEL OF FOREIGN
MINISTERS

The NATO-Ukraine Commission, including representatives of the seven Invitee nations, met today at the level of Foreign Ministers in Brussels.

In discussing the contribution of the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, Ministers emphasised their commitment to promote long-term stability across the region, as well as their common interest in fighting the scourge of international terrorism. Allied Ministers welcomed the update given by Minister Gryshchenko regarding Ukraine's recent involvement in international efforts to support stability and security, and commended Ukraine's continuing practical contribution to KFOR and other ongoing operations.

In reviewing the status of NATO-Ukraine relations, Ministers welcomed the fact that NATO and Ukraine have taken their relationship to a qualitatively new level since adopting the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan a year ago in Prague. Minister Gryshchenko outlined Ukraine's introduction of reforms in the political, economic, military and defence sphere which form part of Ukraine's pursuit of full integration into Euro-Atlantic security structures, including its long-term goal of NATO membership. He emphasised that Ukraine would intensify its efforts to strengthen democracy, the rule of law, freedom of speech and the media, the separation of powers, and judicial independence. He also emphasised that Ukraine will continue to carry forward its defence and security sector reforms in 2004, with the aim of creating a democratically controlled and effective defence and security system.

NATO Ministers expressed appreciation for Ukraine's efforts over the past year to implement the objectives of the Action Plan and the activities of the 2003 Annual Target Plan (ATP), while emphasising that more remains to be done to ensure the practical implementation of reforms. They called upon Ukraine to place particular emphasis on ensuring free and fair elections, guaranteeing media freedoms and rule of law, strengthening civil society and the judiciary, improving arms export controls, as well as making progress on and funding defence reform. They noted that further concrete progress in these areas would be key to ensuring Ukraine's

success in the process of Euro-Atlantic integration. In this context, the Commission noted the Annual Report on progress made to achieve the objectives of the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan.

Ministers were also informed of the status of negotiations on the NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan for 2004, which will include the internal activities Ukraine plans to undertake over the coming year, as well as many of the NATO-Ukraine activities which are foreseen. In this regard, the NATO-Ukraine Commission at Ministerial level tasked NUC Ambassadors to continue to work towards the finalisation of the 2004 NATO-Ukraine Annual Target Plan.

Ministers concluded that NATO and Ukraine would continue to consolidate the progress made to deepen and broaden the NATO-Ukraine relationship, and to pursue policies of transparency and co-operation in matters of common concern.

(end text)

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Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

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Text: EAPC Meeting of NATO, Partner Foreign Ministers Held Dec. 5

(Discuss role Partner countries play in responding to new threats)

Foreign ministers and representatives of the member countries of NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) -- which includes both NATO and Partner countries -- met in Brussels December 5.

The chairman's summary said the ministers discussed the role NATO Partner countries could play in responding to new threats to the international community; the participation of Partners in NATO's missions in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo; development of Partners' military capabilities; and the role that Partners, especially those from Central Asia, could

play in "enhanced political consultations" within EAPC on Afghanistan.

The ministers also stressed their resolve to fight terrorism; reaffirmed that democratic reforms were an important factor in maintaining security and stability; and discussed work underway to develop a NATO policy on combating human trafficking -- which would apply to all personnel taking part in NATO-led operations.

The foreign ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of Serbia and Montenegro attended the meeting as observers.

Following is the chairman's summary:

(begin text)

NATO Headquarters
Press Release
5 December 2003

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE EURO-ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL IN FOREIGN MINISTERS SESSION

The Foreign Ministers and Representatives of the member countries of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) met in Brussels today.

They welcomed the participation of the Foreign Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro as observers in the meeting and reaffirmed the commitment of the Euro-Atlantic community to peace, security and stability in the Balkans. Ministers encouraged both countries to continue to make progress that would allow them to become members of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the EAPC.

Ministers discussed the continuing adaptation of Partnership from the Prague Summit of last year through to the Istanbul Summit next year. In particular, they focused on the role that the Partnership could play in responding to the new threats that confronted the international community. They also discussed the continued and increased participation of Partners in NATO's new missions -- many Partners are currently contributing to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan and continue to

provide valuable contributions to NATO missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Ministers agreed to deepen practical cooperation to help Partner forces develop important military capabilities. They also stressed the importance of enhanced political consultations on Afghanistan in the EAPC framework and emphasized the role that Partners, especially those from Central Asia, could play in this regard.

Ministers reaffirmed their resolve to fight terrorism. They underlined their commitment to the implementation of the Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism and welcomed activities undertaken. They also welcomed further consultations in the EAPC framework on the protection of the civilian population against WMD incidents and attacks.

They agreed that the Comprehensive Review of EAPC and PfP launched at the Prague Summit constituted the essential framework within which Partnership would continue to evolve. They took note of progress made in several key areas -- such as expanded opportunities for cooperation introduced through the Individual Partnership Action Plan mechanism and initiatives undertaken to ensure that the work of the Partnership is conducted as efficiently as possible.

Ministers welcomed the call issued by NATO Foreign Ministers at their meeting the day before for the upcoming Istanbul Summit to build on progress made at the Prague Summit to further re-focus Partnership for Peace to better reflect its post-enlargement dimensions and the Alliance's focus on new threats. They welcomed the Alliance's objective to promote a special focus on the strategically important regions of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Ministers reaffirmed that democratic reforms were an important factor in maintaining security and stability. They agreed that the reform of the defence structures and other institutions related to security were important building blocs in undertaking wider democratic transformations. They underlined that the new Partnership mechanisms agreed at the Prague Summit provided a framework for the Euro-Atlantic community to support such endeavours. They reiterated their willingness to consult, and

exchange experience, in the EAPC framework, on relevant issues related to democratic reform.

Ministers took note of work underway to develop a NATO policy on combating the trafficking of women and children, which would apply to all personnel taking part in NATO-led operations. They welcomed that, to the maximum extent possible, the development of such a policy and associated measures would be taken forward with EAPC Partners.

Finally, Ministers thanked the outgoing Secretary General of NATO and Chairman of the EAPC for his leadership and pledged their full support to his successor.

(end text)

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Shirin Ebadi to Claim Place in the Illustrious History of the Nobel Prize

(More than a century of history underscores importance of prize)

By Elizabeth Kelleher

Washington File Special Correspondent

Washington -- When Iranian human rights activist Shirin Ebadi receives the Nobel Peace Prize December 10 in Oslo, she will join a truly select group of individuals. The Nobel Peace Prize is one of the most widely acclaimed awards in the world, and past recipients have included some of the most highly respected and influential individuals of the past century.

But generally less is known about the founder of the Nobel Prizes, a 19th century Swedish chemist who amassed a fortune from his invention of dynamite, than about those who have received his prizes.

The irony of the peace prize bearing the name of the inventor of dynamite has given rise to a myth that Alfred Nobel established the award as a way to expiate his guilty conscience.

However, Irwin Abrams, the U.S. author of several books on the Nobel Peace Prize, debunks this myth, explaining that Alfred Nobel was strictly interested in the civil applications of his invention for building canals, mining and commercial construction.

As with many scientific discoveries, the military engineers simply found alternative uses for his product.

The establishment of the peace prize was, in fact, not Nobel's initial intention. As a self-educated inventor without a university degree, Nobel wanted to encourage other aspiring scholars. Consequently he planned to leave his fortune to Swedish institutions that would make awards for physics, chemistry, medicine and literature.

But late in his life, his friend the Austrian Baroness Bertha von Suttner inspired him to establish a prize for peace making. She was a prime organizer of an international peace movement and author of "Die Waffen Nieder" (Lay Down Your Arms).

Nobel's will says the peace prize should go to the person "who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations; for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses."

On occasion, the prize has been shared by parties who hold peace congresses. In 1973, Henry Kissinger of the United States and Le Duc Tho of North Vietnam were named for a cease-fire agreement that did not hold up. Le Duc Tho refused the award.

But "work for fraternity between nations" is a frequently cited reason for awarding the prize, especially to human rights protectors. The first instance of this was when Albert Lutuli won the Peace Prize for his civil rights work in South Africa in 1960.

There have been several cases since, including Martin Luther King Jr. (1964), for leading the U.S. civil rights movement, Adolfo Perez Esquivel (1980) for human rights work in Latin America, Lech Walesa (1983) for fighting for workers' rights in Poland, Bishop Desmond Tutu (1984) for fighting

apartheid in South Africa, the Dalai Lama (1989) for his work for rights for people in Tibet, and Bishop Belo (1996) for working to protect the people of East Timor (1996).

Shirin Ebadi, this year's recipient, follows in this tradition for her work in defense of the rights of Iranian women and children.

The first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1901, five years after Nobel's death. Awards are announced each October, the month of Nobel's birth, and presented on December 10, the anniversary of his death. In some years, the prize is shared between individuals or accorded to organizations. Some years, no prize is awarded, as commonly happened during last century's world wars.

Nominations come from Nobel committee members, members of national governments, members of other official organizations and former recipients. Typically, there are about 150 nominations considered.

The Peace Prize, always the last of the Nobels to be announced, carries with it a monetary award of \$1 million. Presentations were made in a room at the Nobel Institute until 1947, when the event moved to a larger venue in a university auditorium. In 1990, the year Mikhail Gorbachev won the prize, the event moved to Oslo city hall, where there are more than 1,000 seats.

According to Anne Kjelling, librarian at the Nobel Institute, an important change was made in 1992. Rules had stipulated that the recipient must give a speech outlining his work within six months of receiving the prize. Because the award ceremony was attracting foreign dignitaries and media attention the institute decided the speech should be given that day.

Kjelling recalls that one of the most moving and popular speeches given was that of Elie Wiesel in 1986. Wiesel, a survivor of Nazi concentration camps, said, "Remembering is a noble and necessary act." His speech is reprinted in many textbooks for children.

In the 102 years since the first award, it has become celebrated to a degree Nobel undoubtedly never dreamed of. David Morley, Canadian director of "Medecins Sans Frontieres" (Doctors Without Borders), said he was awakened by a phone call from a television station at 5 a.m. when his organization won in 1999 and was interviewed on the spot. He said that in Canada, following the publicity of the award, fundraising for MSF quadrupled and that his organization now enjoys greater visibility with government officials.

Photos taken and words spoken on announcement day take on symbolic importance. Shirin Ebadi was in Paris on the day her award was announced. Abrams said it signifies "she can travel in Paris, not dressed in Islamic garb" after being imprisoned in the past for controversial stands she took in Iran. "It shows it is not like a totalitarian state," he said.

The prize is often controversial. The five-person selection committee is appointed by the Norwegian parliament, and consequently its make-up is influenced by the relative strength of political parties in that body.

In 1935 Carl von Ossietzky, a pacifist journalist being held by Hitler, was nominated by friends who wanted to protect him. They did not expect him to get the prize, but he did. A Norwegian foreign minister and former prime minister withdrew from the committee rather than incur the disapproval of the Nazi government.

Since then, no member of the government has been allowed to serve on the committee. In 1977, a rule barred members of parliament from serving as well.

Because committee proceedings are secret, there are always questions about why some recipients are chosen and others left out. Gandhi never got a Peace Prize; Tolstoy never got a literature prize.

While Nobel originally meant for the prize to go to young people as an incentive, it has often been given to older people in recognition of past accomplishments. The median age for all recipients is 63. More recently, however, the trend has been to choose younger candidates, with the average age dropping to the fifties. The committee may be

trying to recognize people young enough to continue their work for some time.

Ebadi, who wins at the age of 56, represents this trend as well as two others -- the committee's growing tendency to recognize non-Westerners and women. Of the 11 women who have received the prize, four have been chosen in the past dozen years.

The December 10 ceremony in Oslo will be a gala media event complete with presentation, speech, a royal dinner, and a star-studded concert. Former recipient Desmond Tutu reportedly recalls, however, that the most enjoyable moment of his award ceremony in 1984 was when the hall was evacuated due to a security threat. Outside, everyone sang a civil rights song. The bishop said he enjoyed this time the most because he was with ordinary people.

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Provincial Reconstruction Teams Help Build Afghanistan's Future

(Sixth PRT office opened in Herat)

By David Shelby
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- A tree-planting ceremony was deemed a fitting ritual to mark the opening of the sixth Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) headquarters in Herat, western Afghanistan, December 1.

The PRTs are a growing part of the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. The original concept grew from a desire on the part of coalition partners to help the Kabul government reach out across the diverse provinces and unite the country behind the national rebuilding process adopted by Afghan leaders in Bonn, Germany, in December, 2001.

The function of the PRTs is to work with local officials and populations in rebuilding the physical and administrative infrastructure that in many places has been reduced to rubble by decades of war. Specific projects include the rehabilitation of government buildings, such as fire and police stations, law courts and communications installations as well as economically significant infrastructure such as bridges, dams and roads.

Afghan and coalition officials hope that the PRTs will be able to contribute to a greater sense of security in the provinces and help revitalize economic activity, allowing local populations to see the positive impact of the Bonn Process.

PRTs are typically located in remote parts of the country where non-governmental organizations do not have a significant presence, often due to security concerns. Officials hope that the PRTs will help attract NGOs to these regions by bringing about increased security and stability.

The PRT program was launched in November 2002, and the first three pilot offices were established in Gardez, Bamiyan and Konduz. The success of those offices led to the construction of three more houses in Mazar-e-Sharif, Parwan and now Herat. Coalition plans currently call for 12 PRT houses in total with the next three scheduled for construction in Jalalabad, Kandahar and Qalat.

Civil affairs teams from the coalition partners' forces man the offices and circulate within the provinces to meet with local leaders and identify projects that need to be undertaken. Local laborers are then hired to work with the team in carrying out the project. Most project budgets range from \$50,000 to \$150,000.

Lt. Col. John Lineweaver, commander of the new Herat office, points to an example of a worthwhile project in his region -- an abandoned Soviet era cement plant on the outskirts of town. "If we do the homework ... it could mean 5,000 jobs," he said.

The Herat office will serve the provinces of Herat, Farah, Ghowr and Badghis, accounting for about 20 percent of Afghanistan's territory and some 3 million inhabitants.

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Iranian American Comic Delivers Truths Wrapped in Humor

(Maz Jobrani draws laughs from stereotypes of Middle Easterners)

By Steve Holgate
Washington File Special Correspondent

Los Angeles -- Important truths are often best delivered wrapped in humor. Nowhere is this more true than in the United States, where night club comics often make their audiences laugh by confronting them with difficult truths about society, politics and human relationships.

With the increasingly multi-cultural society that has proven one of the United States' greatest strengths, it should come as no surprise that one of its most noted young comics is originally from Iran, and often forces his American audiences to look at their preconceived ideas about Middle Eastern cultures, dissolving those stereotypes even while he points them out.

Maziyar Jobrani, born in Tehran, raised from childhood in the San Francisco Bay Area and now living in Los Angeles, has become a prominent figure in the comedy scene in Southern California, the nation's entertainment capital, where he often headlines the program at such hot spots as The Comedy Store and the Laugh Factory on Hollywood's fabled Sunset Strip.

Jobrani said in a recent interview that much of the perspective that shapes his humor comes from living i

n two cultures at once: "Comedy comes from what you know. Being an Iranian in America you get both cultures. Outside of school you hang out with your American friends, do the sorts of things they do. Then you go home to your Iranian family and live as they do. You're both inside the culture and outside of it at the same time."

A couple of jokes from his nightclub act illustrates the point. "People think I'm an expert on the region, just because I was born in Iran. My American friends are always asking me, 'Maz, what's up with gas prices?' I tell them that I don't know. I pay the same prices as them. It's not as though I have a special pump at the gas station. I don't walk in and say, 'Hey, Hassan, discount pump for me. Thank you, my fellow countryman.'"

"Iranians in Los Angeles are so rich that we've bought up (the wealthy suburb of) Westwood. We tell the Americans, 'You take our oil, we take your land.'"

The road to a show business career has not been straight or easy. He jokes that, though the stage was an early passion, "most Iranian parents nearly have a heart attack if you tell them that you want to be an actor." Instead he studied political science at the University of California at Berkeley. After graduation, he entered a doctoral program in political science at the University of California at Los Angeles. Once in Los Angeles, however, he did some acting in his spare time and realized that this was where his heart was. Inspired in part by the comedian and actor Eddie Murphy, he decided to drop the Ph.D. program and go into show business. He hasn't looked back.

Though comedy remains the center of his increasingly diverse show business career and the venue for widening the cultural horizons of his American audiences, Maz Jobrani has branched out into acting, becoming a frequent guest star on a number of television dramas, such as "NYPD Blue," "ER," and has appeared in several movies.

As one of the country's most prominent comedians of Middle Eastern descent, he has also appeared in the national news media, including stories in "Newsweek," "The Wall Street Journal," the "CBS Morning Show," and on CNN. Especially in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, he has become a noted voice in reminding Americans of the positive contributions made by the vast majority of Muslim Americans. He does this, in part, by poking fun at stereotypes that are often based on fear, such as in the following joke.

"A lot of my Iranian friends go around now pretending to be Italian. You will be at a party and one will want to introduce some girl to all his friends. He'll say, 'These are my friends - Hassan, Hussein, Ali, Reza, Mohammad ... and I'm Tony. Yes, they are Iranian -- I am Italian.'"

The material can challenge American audiences by getting laughs out of controversial situations. Commenting on the effectiveness of a law passed in the wake of 9/11 that requires many permanent foreign residents to register with the Department of Homeland Security, Jobrani imagines a would-be terrorist saying to himself, "Let's see, I've got the bomb, the map. Is there anything I've forgotten?" he slaps himself in the forehead, "I forgot to go down and register!"

The culturally-based material Jobrani writes finds its reflection in the multicultural audiences in the United States. "The good thing here," he says, "is that it's all a mix of cultures. People come here (from overseas) to work and to live and become part of the culture. In fact, all of these 'other' cultures are the culture."

Iranian culture has added much to the United States, Jobrani insists. "Poetry is so important to us -- all of the arts. The way we bend over backwards to be hospitable to other people, to be respectful. In the rest of American culture, things are very individualistic," he says.

His background in political science has helped him shape his comedy, Jobrani says. "It gave me an education in politics and in history. Lots of comedians never went to university. They can only talk about their own experiences. Middle Eastern men are interested in politics and like to debate. With an education, you can take that broader view onstage."

He enjoys nightclub comedy for the chance to talk about serious topics, but also simply for the thrill of a successful show. "It's all yours," he says, unlike most stage or movie work, which is collaborative. "If something goes wrong, you're on your own." Jobrani compares the comic's job to that of a high wire artists working without a net but says that this is part of its reward.

Not all of the work is exciting. "Other people who don't work in the business, think that it's a lot more glamorous than it really is," Jobrani says. "If you go see a movie, what you're seeing are the highlights" of the actor's labors. "It might take thirty, sixty days of hard work to film what will go into two hours. It's long, hard work. It can be stressful. But it's fun. I wouldn't do anything else."

Like anyone who commits himself wholeheartedly to his work, he finds it meaningful. "What I do is try and get across the point that Middle Easterners are not always like we're shown on the news, which tends to be negative, because of the nature of news. We're doctors, teachers, artists, family members. That's what I'm trying to get at onstage."

"People accept that message," Jobrani says, his voice serious, emphatic. "They'll say 'I relate to that.' They'll say that they have an Iranian friend or someone else from another ethnic group, and 'I relate to that.' It's cool when someone says that. You know then that it's not just a job."

Jobrani has just finished a successful run of a stage play in Los Angeles, is booked for a major Iranian-American cultural event in Washington, DC, looks forward to the release of a new movie, and continues to work steadily at the best of the comic nightclubs. It is a hectic, demanding schedule but as he works to establish understanding and break down stereotypes he takes great satisfaction from that fact, that, as he says, "it's not just a job."

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Iranian Opposition Supporters Voice Discontent with Regime

(AEI hosts radio talk show connecting U.S. and Iran)

By Afzal Khan

Washington File Special Correspondent

Washington -- The growing opposition to the Islamic regime in Iran found expression during an

intercontinental radio talk show connecting Iranian opposition supporters with Iranian Americans December 3.

The event was organized by the American Enterprise Institute in Washington and was broadcast live by the Farsi-language radio station "Radio Sedaye Iran (KRSI)" that broadcasts daily into Iran from Los Angeles, California. A panel of Iranian-American activists invited by AEI joined in the discussions with opposition activists from within Iran participating by phone.

The callers from Iran, who used pseudonyms for security reasons, were united in their belief that the so-called reforms promised by the Islamic regime are a sham and that true freedom and democracy can only return to Iran with the removal of the "mullah-ridden" government there.

A caller identifying herself as a housewife said, "We gave President Khatami six and a half years to impose his reforms, but nothing has happened. We don't trust him," she said

The housewife, who claimed to be a member of the "activist" movement in Iran, said that democracy cannot "co-exist" with an Islamic regime, and that religion must be divorced from government.

Asked what the United States can do to help the democracy movement in Iran, she said the U.S. government must not "support" or encourage the Islamic regime. Instead, the Bush administration should "boycott" the regime, she said.

She said she was part of a large group of Iranians who on September 11, 2001 took part in a candlelight procession. "Many of us were arrested and taken to solitary cells," she said.

A student under the pseudonym of "Ms. Nargess" called on the United States to play "a bigger role" against the Islamic regime by providing support to the opposition media.

"Nargess" said that as a woman living in Iran, she wanted a secular government, not an Islamic one.

The third caller, identifying himself as a university professor, said that Iranians for the last 25 years have been denied freedom.

He said the 65 million people in Iran have "God-given rights" and that they should be allowed to hold a referendum to choose their government, "be it a monarchy or a Khomeini-like one."

The professor urged Iranians living abroad to help the opposition. He pointed out that radio programs beamed into Iran need to be more sophisticated and have "interesting programs" such as on human rights, instead of just rhetoric against the Islamic regime.

A fourth caller said that he is "a handicapped man" as a result of wounds suffered during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s.

He said he is a practicing Muslim who wanted the opposition to be more organized. "We want the United States to recognize us," he said.

The fifth caller, "Hassan," said he too was handicapped from wounds sustained in the Iran-Iraq war.

"Hassan" said the highly touted reforms are "done and finished" and the people in Iran are "fed-up and cannot take it anymore."

The sixth caller, describing himself as a poet, complained about the dire economic conditions facing many Iranians. He said he knew many jobless people who eat just one meal a day of "only potatoes and no meat or chicken."

In answer to a question from AEI moderator, Danielle Pletka, a caller identifying herself as "Miss Iran" said activists in the student movement were going to boycott the parliamentary elections planned by the regime in February.

Another caller, "Mohammad," said that "two months ago" posters to boycott the elections began appearing on walls.

The four Iranian-American panelists who took part in the dialogue were:

-- Manda Zand Ervin, the founder and president of the International Alliance of Iranian Women, which draws international attention to human rights abuses against the women and children of Iran;

-- Roozbeh Farahanipour, a writer and journalist who is a founder-organizer of "Hezbeh Marzeh Por Gohar" (The Glorious Frontiers Party), which has been outlawed by the regime;

-- Ramin Parham, of the newly founded Iran Institute for Democracy;

-- Aryo Pirouznia, who worked with the Student Movement Coordination Committee for Democracy in Iran.

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Women Can Be the Peacemakers of Africa

(The survivors help make the post-conflict history)

By Colleen Flanagan
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington - In the Great Lakes region of Africa, countries like Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi all have their share of female victims of the genocide and violence that was all too common during their civil wars.

But they also have their survivors, who are the seeds of hope for the future.

"Women are survivors of these conflicts," explained Cheyanne Church, Director of Search for Common Ground, "and they are essential builders of peace in post-conflict countries."

When the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 1325 in October 2001, officially endorsing the role of women in the peace process in post-conflict countries, Church felt the UNSC realized what she already knew.

Church, with other experts on women's empowerment in Africa, Elizabeth Powley, Krista Riddley, and Laketch Dirasse, addressed the 102nd Great Lakes Policy Forum on December 4, championing the women who survived the atrocities of genocide and brutal violence in the region, and calling for their continued involvement in their country's political reorganization.

"Women are rarely a part of the peace agreement process," said Church. "As recently as 1999, there were no official women at the table in the DRC."

But the realities of the post-conflict periods in these states have forced a change in perspective.

In Rwanda in 1995, women and children made up 70 percent of the post-conflict population. When Parliament was reorganized, women held 49 percent of the available seats, said Elizabeth Powley, Associate Director for the Policy Commission of Women Waging Peace. She claimed that this is the largest percentage of female involvement in a legislature anywhere in the world.

Not only did Rwanda's citizens choose a substantial number of women to help reshape their country in Parliament, but Rwanda's government also appointed women to several key positions in the post-genocide government, including the head of the Unity and Reconciliation Commission, Powley said.

Additionally, Rwanda has developed the Ministry for Gender and Women in Development, as well as 'gender posts' within every other government office and agency at all levels. According to Powley, Rwandans have succeeded in "mainstreaming gender at all political levels," so even the office of Mayor would also include a post for Vice-Mayor for Gender Affairs.

"This isn't a matter of 'add women and get peace,'" explained Powley. "The governments need to be inclusive. They need to reach out to the underserved population. If Rwandans are right, and women are better forgivers than men, then it's crucial to have even more of them in these kinds of positions."

According to Dirasse, Chief of the United Nations Development Fund for Women's (UNIFEM) Africa Section, the Great Lakes Region is one that is heavily stricken by both poverty and HIV/AIDS, especially in the DRC where 61.2 percent of the population falls below the poverty line, and 52 percent of the population is infected with HIV/AIDS.

"However, it is a region highly endowed with resources and remarkable women," Dirasse explained. "These women are organizing for peace and against violence."

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